

NYCDOE Post-test Guidance for Literacy Instruction May 2012

Teachers have already established their final units for the year. In preparation for the shifts required next year, teachers might consider practicing the following high-leverage focus for instruction where appropriate in the planned unit of study: ***Facilitate students asking and answering text-dependent questions with complex text, when speaking and writing.***

The Rationale:

- Next year, NY State tests in grades 3-8 for ELA will be CCLS-aligned and assess students' ability to read and analyze complex text and answer text-dependent questions in extended written responses.
- In preparation for full implementation of the CCLS in SY 2014-15, the citywide instructional expectations are asking teachers to focus instruction on understanding complex text (R1, R10) and to develop better questioning techniques (Danielson 3b)
- While text-to-self connections help students connect their learning to their own lives, text-dependent questions are critical to helping students unlock complex text. Strategic, text-dependent questions can help bridge the connection between what kids know and do not yet know.
- Crafting and use of high-quality text-dependent questions is difficult and requires practice

What are Text-Dependent Questions?

- Questions that do not pull students away from the text (e.g. Tell me about a time you went sight-seeing . . .).
- Questions that are specific to the information found in a particular text rather than general questions that could be asked of any text.
- Questions that require students to pull evidence from the text in order to answer them.
- Questions that are open-ended (e.g. not one clear answer) and require students to re-read the text closely in order to infer, interpret, and analyze ideas and language.

Sample questions for *The Story of Ruby Bridges* by Robert Coles (Grade 3):

Text-to-self questions that are often seen in classrooms	Integration of text-to-self and text-dependent questions
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have you ever experienced or witnessed discrimination? How did you react?2. How would you react if you were told you were not allowed to go to your school anymore?3. What is the bravest thing you've ever done?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What do we know about Ruby?2. How would you react if you were told you were not allowed to go to your school anymore? Compare your reaction to Ruby's reaction.3. Using what we've learned about <i>cause and effect</i>, what are the two most important events that led to Ruby desegregating her school? Of all the things that happened, why do you think these are the two most important events?

Resources:

1. If teachers already know what texts they want to teach, consider using the guidance around text-dependent questions above and IFL's [Designing Open-ended, Text-based Questions](#) to develop text-dependent questions for any text.
2. Alternatively, if teachers are looking for texts to teach, consider using the collection of sample texts with text-dependent questions (Close Reading Exemplars) that are already available for adoption or adaptation on engageny.org.

Is this right for my school?

Schools should assess the needs of their teachers and students and their current plans for curriculum and instruction to decide if this focus makes sense for their school. This is only a recommendation, not a mandate.